

## MARYLAND HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN INFORMATION

RESOURCE NAME: Nanticoke Survey District

MHT INVENTORY NUMBER: WI-289

## MARYLAND COMPREHENSIVE PLAN DATA

1. Historic Period Theme(s):   Architecture  
  Commerce
2. Geographic Orientation:       Eastern Shore
3. Chronological/Development Period(s):   Agricultural-Industrial Transition  
  1815-1870  
  Industrial-Urban Domiance  
  1870-1930
4. Resource Type(s):               Standing Structures

# Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

MARYLAND INVENTORY OF  
HISTORIC PROPERTIES

Survey No. WI-289

Magi No.

DOE ☐ yes ☐ no

## 1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic

and/or common Nanticoke Survey District

## 2. Location

street & number MD Route 349 and intersecting roads ☐ not for publication

city, town Nanticoke ☐ vicinity of congressional district First

state Maryland county Wicomico

## 3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> not applicable	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

## 4. Owner of Property (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name Multiple owners

street & number telephone no.:

city, town state and zip code

## 5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Wicomico County Clerk of Court liber

street & number Wicomico County Courthouse folio

city, town Salisbury state Maryland 21801

## 6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title

date ☐ federal ☐ state ☐ county ☐ local

pository for survey records

city, town state

## 7. Description

Survey No. WI-289

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> original site	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved	date of move _____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

Prepare both a summary paragraph and a general description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

The community of Nanticoke is located along the Nanticoke River between Ragged Point and Roaring Point, in Wicomico County, Maryland. The main road access is provided by means of Nanticoke Road (MD 349), and the village is approximately 20 miles southwest of Salisbury. In addition to Nanticoke Road, the community is oriented around a number of side roads including Bank Road, Elsey Road, Spring Lane, Hickman Lane, and a host of others lanes.

The historic resources that define the community of Nanticoke principally date to the second half of the nineteenth century and the first quarter of the twentieth century. Approximately one-hundred and twenty-five (125) standing structures line the primary roads and side streets of the community. Principal among the historic properties is the Nanticoke Methodist Church (WI-19), a well-detailed Gothic Revival frame structure erected on a high point of land on the east side of MD Route 349. The church is one of the most sophisticated architectural designs based on academic sources for churches of the late nineteenth century. Standing north of the church is the Henry James Messick house, the most dominant example of late nineteenth century domestic design in the village. Built around 1890 by merchant Henry James Messick, the house is a large two-and-a-half story mansard roofed dwelling that follows a traditional center hall/double-pile floor plan. The house retains a majority of its late nineteenth century Victorian exterior and interior woodwork finishes. While the oldest structure has yet to be determined, the center section of the John W. Parks house (WI-278), a story-and-a-half, one-room plan frame dwelling fitted with early nineteenth century Federal woodwork. Several two-story, three- or five-bay houses with exterior brick chimneys date from around 1850-1860.

The lion-share of dwellings, however, date from the last quarter of the nineteenth century and the first decades of the twentieth century and follow several common architectural forms for the Eastern Shore. The two-story or two-and-a-half story, three- or five-bay cross gabled dwellings is particularly common and the front elevation often boasts a turned post porch and eave brackets. By the late years of the nineteenth century and the early twentieth century it was common to leave the soffits open with the decorated rafter ends exposed. Narrow brick stove chimney pierce the rooflines and rise through the gable ends or flank the center or side hall.

A large percentage of the historic structures that define Nanticoke are located on the side streets east and west of the main road. Those found east of the highway and located along Hickman Lane and its side streets stand in the black settled section of Nanticoke, which has its own church, Asbury United Methodist (WI-284), a school and a store. The houses tend to be of more modest proportions than those along the main street, but many dwellings display similar decorative treatments.

One or two-story service wings, a few with the distinctive stepped profile extend to the rear of most village houses. By the early twentieth century large and medium-sized four-square dwellings as well as bungalow style residences were erected between older dwellings.

## 8. Significance

Survey No. WI-289

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500–1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

### Specific dates

### Builder/Architect

check: Applicable Criteria: ☐ A ☐ B ☒ C ☐ D  
and/or

Applicable Exception: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G

Level of Significance: ☐ national ☐ state ☒ local

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

The village of Nanticoke developed on a sandy ridge of land along the Nanticoke River roughly bounded by Ragged Point on the north and Roaring Point on the south. It has not been determined when a village started to coalesce in this location, situated on the county road between St. Mary's Episcopal Church and Nanticoke Point. The old road followed the course of the current Jesterville Road, providing access overland to group of plantations that developed along the Nanticoke River. During the period from the 1670s to the mid eighteenth century the land tracts remained fairly large, ranging from 150 to 500 acres. The population was dispersed and thinly spread over the region, although by the late eighteenth century the area Episcopalians warranted a separate church independent of Green Hill. St. Mary's Episcopal Church, a chapel of ease for Stepney Parish, was established around 1796-98 with a structure built on a tract known as "Turnstile," centrally located between the modern villages of Tyaskin, Bivalve, and Nanticoke. By the last decades of the eighteenth century, the land on which the village of Nanticoke developed largely, known as "St. Albans," was subdivided into smaller parcels. Patented in 1674 with 200 acres, the tract had been fragmented into several 20-to 60-acre parcels by the time of the 1783 Federal tax assessment.(2) This trend increased over the next few decades with several one-acre parcels being sold to various individuals.(3) The modest sized one-acre to twenty-acre parcels suggests that a village cluster of dwellings were standing on the St. Albans tract by the first decades of the nineteenth century. The oldest known house to survive in the village is a story-and-a-half one-room plan dwelling erected around 1820 and now incorporated in the center of the John W. Parks house (WI-278), located on the north side of the village on a tract known as "Wallace's Venture."

Over the course of the mid nineteenth century a distinct village developed along the main road leading to Nanticoke Point. By 1877, the community was stretched across a several mile distance with approximately four dozen dwellings, mostly oriented to the main road. Several landings along the Nanticoke River, one on the Willing farm and another at Windsor Cove, provided moorage for vessels to load or unload. Several general stores, located in the village or near the river shore, provided finished goods for local residents. John Turner & Son advertised in the business directly of the Lake, Griffing, and Stevenson atlas as "Dealers in Dry Goods, Groceries, Hardware, Queensware, Boots, Shoes & c., Nanticoke, Md."(4)

(Continued)



## 8.1 SIGNIFICANCE

Nanticoke Survey District, WI-289

Nanticoke

With an economy mixed between agricultural produce and shellfish harvests, the community of Nanticoke prospered with much of the Eastern Shore during the period between 1880 and 1930, especially with oyster yields peaking during these years. A testimony to the personal successes experienced during those decades is expressed tangibly in Nanticoke today with the bulk of the surviving houses dating from the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century. The Henry James Messick house (WI-276) and the Hobart Willing house (WI-277) are two particularly expressive examples of domestic design distinctive to the time. The Messick house is a large mansard roofed dwelling that stands in the center of the village and its squarish form is surrounded by a wraparound turn post porch embellished with sawn brackets and spindle work. The Hobart Willing house, built on a less ambitious scale, is decorated with many of the same features.

Coincidental with the construction of new houses and buildings along the main road, was a surge of activity within the black community of Nanticoke, which developed on the eastern periphery of the main village along what is now known as Nutter Road and Hickman Lane. A lot from an adjacent tract known as "Town send's Situation" was conveyed by Samuel Dickerson in his 1837 will to free black, Hannah Nutter.<sup>(5)</sup> The black residents of Nanticoke erected new dwellings during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, presumably through hard work as watermen or in the canning houses that appeared in the region after the turn of the century. Standing on the corner of the intersection of Hickman Lane and Nutter Road, is an impressive tee-shaped frame church erected in 1924 for the African-American Methodists in the community.

Similar to most watermens' communities, prosperity and profits began to fade after the peak years of the oyster harvests, and the 1929 stock market failure and ensuing depression spelled the end to much in the way of new construction for several decades.

The village retains a distinct nineteenth and twentieth century character that qualifies it for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

## 8.2 SIGNIFICANCE

Nanticoke Survey District  
Nanticoke

## FOOTNOTES

1 Ruth T. Dryden, *Land Records of Wicomico County, 1666-1810*. Westminster, Maryland: Family Line Publications, 1992.

2 Dryden, p. 356-7.

3 Dryden, p. 357.

4 John L. Graham, ed. *The 1877 Atlases and Other Early Maps of the Eastern Shore of Maryland*. Salisbury, Maryland: Peninsula Press, p. 12.

5 Dryden, p. 406.

**TYASKIN**

Dist. No. 3  
WICOMICO CO.

**TYASKIN P.O.**

**WALTERSVILLE**

**GREEN HILL P.O.**

**WHITE HAVEN P.O.**

**TYASKIN DISTRICT BUSINESS REFERENCES.**

**W. J. CATLIN, M.D.**, Physician and Surgeon. All calls promptly attended to. Res. and Office at Belgrade Farm. P.O., Tyaskin, Md.

**W. D. ERATE**, Dealer in Groceries, Hardware, Tobacco, Liquors, &c., Tyaskin, Md.

**NOAH J. TILGHMAN**, Proprietor of "Tyaskin Mills." Manufacturer of Corn-meal, Hominy, and all kinds of Lumber. Custom work done in sawing and grinding.

**J. E. B. ECHNER**, Owner of the fine Sloop "James Wesley." All kinds of freighting done to and from any point on the "Chesapeake Bay" or its tributaries. Especial Attention to the purchase and

**WARE WINRIGHT**, Dealer in Dry Goods, Groceries, Hats, Caps, Boots, Shoes, Hardware, Queensware, Glassware, Notions, &c., and all goods usually kept in a country store. Whitehaven P.O.

**W. G. & J. Q. TILGHMAN**, Dealers in Dry Goods, Groceries, Hats, Caps, Boots, Shoes, Hardware, Queensware, Glassware, Cutlery, Tobacco, Cigars, Notions, &c., Tyaskin, Md.

**JOHN WILLING AND CO.**, Dealers in Dry Goods, Groceries, Hats, Caps, Boots, Shoes, Hardware, Queensware, Glassware, Notions and all articles usually kept in a country store. Nanticoke P.O.

**B. A. LANGRALL**, Dealer in Dry Goods, Groceries, Hats, Caps, Boots, Shoes, Hardware, Queensware, Glassware, and all articles usually kept in a first class country store. Store near M. E. Church, Nanticoke Point.

**JNO. TURNER AND SON**, Dealers in Dry Goods, Groceries, Hardware, Queensware, Boots, Shoes, &c., Nanticoke, Md.

**J. A. CONNAWAY**, Physician and Surgeon. Office and Res. near M. E. Church, Nanticoke Point.

W. J. CATLIN, M. D., Physician and Surgeon. All calls promptly attended to. Res. and Office at Belgrade Farm. P. O., Trysaink, Md.

W. D. BEATE, Dealer in Groceries, Hardware, Tobacco, Liquors, &c. Trysaink, Md.

MO. J. TILGHMAN, Proprietor of "Trysaink Mill," Manufacturer of Corn-meal, Hominy, and all kinds of Lumber. Custom work done in sawing and grinding.

J. E. B. HORNER, Owner of the fine Sloop "James Wesley." All kinds of freighting done to and from any points on the Chesapeake Bay, or its tributaries. Especial Attention given to the purchase and freighting of Oysters, Res. and P. O., Trysaink, Md.

W. W. WINGATE, Dealer in Dry Goods, Groceries, Hats, Caps, Hardware, Queensware, Glassware, and the clothing line. Confectionery, Wines, Whiskies, Brandy and Ketch, and all articles usually kept in a first class country store, at Whitehaven.



WI-289  
Nanticoke Survey District

Nanticoke, Maryland Quadrangle  
1942

Mulberry  
Point

DORCHESTER CO  
WICOMICO CO

Roaring  
Point

Nanticoke Harbor

Nanticoke

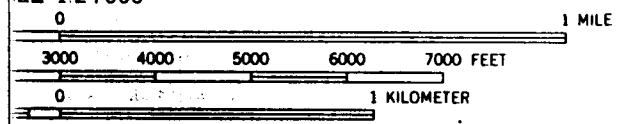
Nanticoke  
Wharf

Al White  
Marsh

Ellis Bay

REAL ISLAND)

SCALE 1:24000



INTERVAL 20 FEET  
S MEAN SEA LEVEL

THE APPROXIMATE LINE OF MEAN HIGH WATER  
OF TIDE IS APPROXIMATELY 1 FOOT

NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS  
ICAL SURVEY, WASHINGTON 25, D. C.  
MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST



QUADRANGLE LOCATION

WATERVIEW 0.3 MI.

INTERIOR GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, WASHINGTON, D. C. - 1942  
MR 2336

ROAD CLASSIFICATION

Medium-duty ——— Light-duty ———  
Unimproved dirt - - - - -

○ State Route

NANTICOKE, MD.

SW/4 NANTICOKE 15' QUADRANGLE  
N3815—W7552.5/7.5

1942

4234000m.N.

38°15'  
75°52'30"

(MONIE)







